



Marine Life Protection Act Initiative



Recreational Fishing in the MLPA North Central Coast Study Region

Presentation to the MLPA North Central Coast Regional Stakeholder Group

August 22-23, 2007 • San Rafael, CA

Jason Vasques, Associate Marine Biologist

California Department of Fish and Game, Marine Region



Acknowledgements

- Tom Baty, Bill Bernard, Josh Churchman, Michael Corden, Peter Grenell, Russ Herring, Jim Hobbs, Ken Jones, Tom Mattusch, Craig Merrilees, Paul Pierce, Phil Sanders, Ben Sleeter, Sean White, Jay Yokomizo
- Including others with expertise and knowledge of recreational fishing in the study region



Purpose of Presentation

- Overview of some recreational fisheries in NCCSR
- Identification of areas different recreational fishers use
- Factors that affect recreational fishers





Sources of Information

- *Nearshore Fishery Management Plan (NFMP)* <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/nfmp/index.html>
- *Abalone Recovery and Management Plan (ARMP)*
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd/armp/index.html>
- *Abalone Report Cards, creel surveys and index sites*
- *Ocean Salmon Project*
- *California Recreational Fisheries Surveys (CRFS)*



Sources of Information

- California Recreational Fisheries Surveys (CRFS) <http://www.recfin.org/>
 - Provides data and estimates of marine finfish catch and angler effort
 - Updates the Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS)
 1. Fourth year of CRFS program, major improvement over MRFSS
 2. Finer spatial resolution and area estimates
 3. Increased sampling effort
 - Incorporates the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) Ocean Salmon Project





Modes

- Boat based
 - *Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessels (CPFV)*
 - *Private and/or rental skiffs*
 - Kayaks
 - Angling, diving or freediving
- Shore-based fishing
 - *Beach and bank* or fishing from *man-made structures*
 - Poke-poling
 - Shore picking
 - Diving or freediving





Primary Target Species/Groups

- *Salmon*
- *RCG Complex*
(rockfish, cabezon, greenling)
- *Lingcod*
- *California Halibut*
- Abalone
- Clams
- *Surfperch*





Salmon

- Modes: CPFV, private skiffs, kayaks, occasionally shorefishing
- Methods: trolling, mooching, jigging
- Key Habitats: open ocean waters (surface to 200 ft) follow schools of baitfish
- Generally NCCSR-wide: Duxbury buoy, Slide Ranch, Rocky Point, Farallon Islands, Muir Beach, 10 Mile Beach





RCG Complex and Lingcod



- Modes: CPFV, private skiffs, kayaks, shorefishing, spearfishing
- Methods: bottomfishing with shrimp flies (sometimes with bait), leadheads, swimbaits, and iron/metal jigs, spearfishing
- Key habitats: rocky reefs and ledges, including highspots and drop-offs, kelp habitats.
- Key areas: Duxbury Reef, Colorado Reef, area south of Pt. Reyes, Farallon Islands, Pigeon Pt, Pescadero, Fanny Shoal, Ocean Cove, Salt Point



Halibut

- Modes: CPFV, private skiffs, kayaks, shorefishing, spearfishing
- Methods: drift-fishing, slow trolling, casting, live bait
- Key Habitats: shallow to deep sandbottoms (sometimes gravel beds), mouths of bays and estuarine habitats
- Key Areas: varies by year (examples are Stinson Beach, Bolinas, Duxbury Reef)





Crab

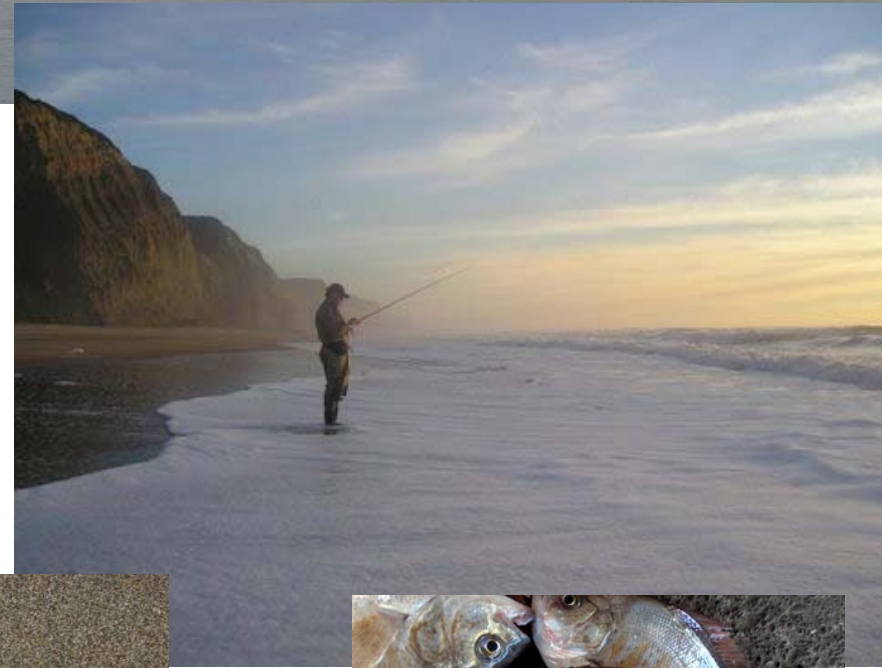


- Modes: CPFVs and private skiffs
- Primary Habitat: deeper sand bottoms for Dungeness crab and hard bottoms for rock crab
- Methods: baited crab pots, sometimes hoop nets.
- Key Areas: shelf areas between Farallon Islands and Golden Gate Bridge, Bolinas, 10 Mile Beach, Drakes Bay, Manchester, generally most sandy areas in NCCSR
- Some crabbing effort is affected by productivity of the recreational salmon fishery



Shore-Based Fishing

- Modes: fishing from beach and banks or man-made structures
- Methods: rod and reel including surf casting
- Key Areas: Beaches, jetties, piers, docks, and accessible rocky intertidal/subtidal areas
- Primary Species: surfperch, striper, flatfishes, rays, skates, sharks, cabezon, lingcod, rockfish, smelt

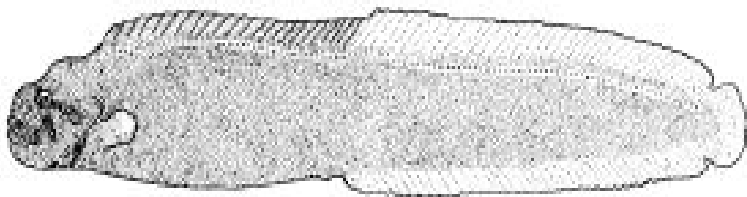




Poke-Pole Fishing

Mode: Beach and bank or man-made

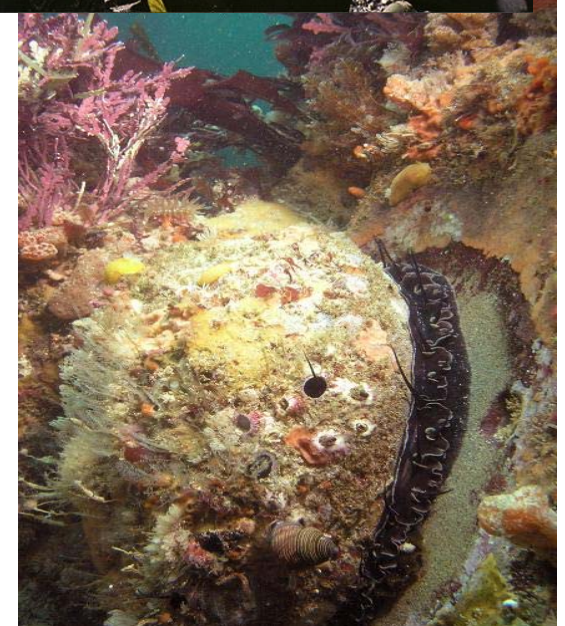
- Method: angling with short line 4 inches
 - Key Habitats: Any rocky reef or jetty during minus tides
 - Key Areas: Princeton Jetty, Bodega Bay Jetty, Muir Beach, Duxbury Reef (south to Slide Ranch), James Fitzgerald State Marine Park
- Species: Monkey-face prickleback, lingcod, cabezon, grass rockfish





Red Abalone

- Modes: Shore-based, private skiff, kayaks
- Methods: freediving or rock picking (primarily at low tides)
 - Access sites from shore and by boat or kayak
- Key Areas: any publicly accessible rocky intertidal area north of Golden Gate Bridge
 - Some examples include: Lawson's Landing and Nick's Cove, Salt Point, Ocean Cove, Timber Cove, Fort Ross





Clamming



- Occurs in intertidal areas during daylight hours, generally at minus tides
- Methods: Digging by hand (with rake, shovel, garden hand fork, or trowel)
- Key Areas: Tomales Bay, Bolinas Bay, Drake's Bay, Bodega Bay
- Clam Species:
 - common littleneck (*Protothaca staminea*)
 - gaper (*Tresus nuttallii*)



Factors Affecting Recreational Fishing

- Access is key issue for all modes
- Distance from ports or home
- Weather and safety
- Regulations and seasons
 - Seasonal closures, bag limits, size limits, and existing area closures





Rockfish Conservation Area

- Large-scale closed areas extending length of the U.S. West Coast
- Can vary year to year
 - Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) recommends recreational RCA depths; adopted by Fish and Game Commission
- Affects recreational groundfish areas due to depth restrictions
 - In 2007 recreational RCA in NCCSR restricts fishing deeper than 30 fathoms (180 feet)





Common Themes Among Modes

- Overlapping target species
- Common fishing grounds
 - Exception: Farallon Islands (mainly CPFVs and private skiffs)
- Some multi-use areas:
 - Duxbury Reef, Bolinas Lagoon (and adjacent areas), in and around Tomales Bay, in and around Bodega Harbor, Ocean Cove, Salt Point





Common Themes Among Modes

- Access is key issue for all modes
 - Sites that provide access for multiple uses and species are important
 - Many shore-based anglers use same sites as boat-based modes (example Ocean Cove)
- Weather and safety
- Regulations and seasons affect fishing

